# Good Timber

The tree that never had to fight   
For sun and sky and air and light,   
That stood out in the open plain   
And always got its share of rain,   
Never became a forest king,   
But lived and died a scrubby thing.   
  
The man who never had to toil   
To heaven from the common soil,   
Who never had to win his share   
Of sun and sky and light and air,   
Never became a manly man,   
But lived and died as he began.   
  
Good timber does not grow in ease.   
The stronger wind, the tougher trees,   
The farther sky, the greater length,   
The more the storm, the more the strength,   
  
By sun and cold, by rain and snows,   
In tree or man, good timber grows.   
Where thickest stands the forest growth   
We find the patriarchs of both;   
And they hold converse with the stars   
Whose broken branches show the scars   
Of many winds and much of strife---   
This is the common law of life.